

Underscores the Need for Senate to Pass Reconciliation

WASHINGTON - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today released the following statement following the signing ceremony for the first part of the health care reform package. Mitchell attended the event at the White House at 11:15 a.m. EST.

"Today represents an important step in our historic efforts towards reforming our health care system to benefit families, seniors, veterans and small businesses. This bill will ban insurance companies from denying people with pre-existing conditions, set up free-market exchanges that allow insurance companies to compete across state lines, strengthen Medicare, and ensure that small business owners and individuals have access to affordable plans.

"Additionally, it will rein in long-term costs and reduce the deficit."

"However, there are several critical provisions in the reconciliation bill that still must be passed by the Senate including closing the prescription drug donut hole for seniors, eliminating the Cornhusker Kickback and other special deals and vital provisions that reduce Arizona's Medicaid costs. It is essential that reconciliation is passed to ensure these measures take effect."

"The reconciliation bill is even more important in the wake of the Governor and state legislature's move to kick nearly 400,000 Arizonans off their health insurance, nearly 40,000 of which are children. The suggestion that somehow this bill is responsible for Arizona's budget crisis is not only delusional, it's absurd. It is a tactic by some with misplaced priorities that have thrown into serious question their judgment to act in the best interests of Arizonans."